



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Mr. Kenneth S. Butcher
The National Institute of Standards
And Technology
Weights and Measures Division
Law and Metric Group
100 Bureau Drive MS 2000
Gaithersburg MD 20899-2000

November 18, 2002

Dear Mr. Butcher,

Subject: Metric Only Labeling

The European Commission welcomes the NIST Metric Program. The United States is the only country in the world that does not accept metric-only labeling, even though the US was one of the founding States of the Metric Convention in 1875.

From 1999, all products on the European Union market must be metric labeled. Even though EU Member States do not use non-metric sizes any more, the transition period, during which the mention of additional non-metric units on labels is tolerated, will run till the end of 2009. After 2009, the EU will allow only metric indications, which is in accordance with international standards.

The European Commission is of the opinion that a uniform worldwide system of measurements can only be achieved if the US follows the rest of the world and adopts the International System.

The European Commission therefore looks forward to the day when metric-only labeling is accepted all over the US.

Sincerely,

Petros Sourmelis
Counselor, Head of Trade Section